THE Harbinger of Light.

A MONTHLY JOURNAL DEVOTED TO

ZOISTIC SCIENCE, FREE THOUGHT, SPIRITUALISM, AND THE HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.

"Dawn approaches, Error is passing away, Men arising shall hail the day."

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CONTENTS.

THE intelligent reader of the many criticisms emanating from the opponents of Spiritualism will have doubtless observed that they are, as a rule, directed not against Spiritualism proper, but against the excrescences of it, which they assume to be a portion of the philosophy. It, therefore, behoves the true friends of the cause to make known the groundwork, at least, of the principles upon which they base their belief. There are two articles in other columns of this paper bearing upon, and defining to some extent, the philosophy or general principles of Spiritualism. That entitled "What is Spiritualism" analyses some of the causes of the dissensions, and deprecates the foisting upon Spiritualism of the many peculiar doctrines and ideas which are too frequently the outgrowth of an unbalanced or only partially illumined mind. With this we cordially coincide; true Spiritualism recognizes none of these excrescences as belonging to the parent tree. They are but parasites that hang to, and disfigure in the eyes of the casual observer, the beauty of its proportions. Spiritualism proper is based upon reason, and admits of nothing that does not commend itself to that God-given principle of our nature. To exercise this principle justly man must be free from prejudice or bias, and weigh impartially the various bearings of all matters that are submitted to that tribunal. No faith should be given without evidence; no alleged fact accepted without proof; and no spiritual communication received authoritatively that does not fully satisfy the requirements of the impartial reasoner.

Our remarks are pertinent to a matter that has come particularly under our notice of late in connection with a whilom spiritual medium, who, under the auspices of a few friends, took a house in this city and established what they were pleased to call "A Magnetic Institute." We have from time to time heard of the wonders said to have been performed at the said institute, but from a previous knowledge of the medium, extending over several years, we had little confidence in anything reliable being given through her to the world. The really inspired writings received at the institute came through minds of a higher platform, before they, by an abnegation of their reason, submitted themselves unreservedly to the psychological influence. Although the greater number of those who belonged to the school have wisely withdrawn in time, unhappily a few, formerly reasonable and intelligent men have succumbed to the psychological influence, and are now mere instruments in the hands of the medium. They claim to be inspired by God, and look down upon Spiritualists (who only receive their inspirations from spirits) with pity. Yet what do these unfortunate and misguided individuals give us in place of the rational philosophy taught by elevated intelligences in the spirit-world but a string of ridiculous assumptions. Firstly—the debasing doctrine of our own unworthiness and utter helplessness to do any thing of ourselves; next a new interpretation of the vision of the seven churches; and last, but not least, we are seriously informed that the medium's spirit has been turned out of her body, and that the said physical tenement is now inhabited by a spirit from the sun? who has taken up his abode *sine die* in that gloomy domicile for the edification of the members of the institute. It is sad to contemplate the condition of mind of those who can believe in such absurdities, and we would endeavor to save others from drifting into such a degrading condition. Many persons, actuated by curiosity or other motives, are in the habit of visiting this medium; and, whenever practicable, she endeavors to bring them under her mesmeric influence, manipulating their heads and commanding them to attend again. A certain percentage of these eventually succumb to the magnetic influence, and become (to use a favorite expression of the medium's) "as little children." We think it high time that this demoralising delusion was exploded, as already two or three promising minds have been wrecked, and others are in the eddies of the gulf. We would strongly advise all who may be induced to visit the so-called institute to keep their wits about them and not to go as "little children," or they may find themselves under a dangerous mesmeric influence before they are aware of it. We should have spoken

on this subject before, but had hoped that the folly would have died out; we find, however, that, although there has been a considerable falling off in the number of members, those calculated to do most harm, unfortunately remain. Intellect, without the control of reason, is like a man on a wild horse minus a bridle. As a matter of course, in this retrogressive school all literature is set aside as useless, and the pupils are prohibited reading books, or taking part in any spiritual circle, the object apparently being to deaden the brain to any impressions but those which come from the presiding influences of the institute. Progressive Spiritualists will readily see how unreasonable are the demands of these misguided persons, and how little there is to justify their assertion that they receive an influx from the Deity. It is the old story over again—a drifting into blind and unreasoning fanaticism. We can but pity the victims, some of whom we know to be estimable men in private life, and sincerely trust that some benign influence may stir up their dormant faculties, and bring reason to the van. They will then see their folly, and be able to extricate themselves from the slough into which they have fallen. If not, let us hope that their example will be a warning to others to let reason guide them in all things temporal and spiritual.

(Since the above was in type we have received a letter from Mr. J. Tyerman, published in another column, strongly endorsing our views.)

COMMUNICATION.

The wind bloweth where it listeth, and ye cannot tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit. To minds on earth, the birth of the Spirit is inconceivable in its primary sense. They can and do conceive of a birth into the second state of human life, when the embryo man emerges into a state of actual life, where he perceives the train of effects which follow certain causes; but the idea of the first life of his infant spirit he cannot grasp; he reasons from what has passed before his eyes, and from his actual experience and the knowledge thus gained passes as truth to him; but, there is infallible truth at the centre of all, whose revelations come gradually into man's consciousness, though the ways of its development are various as are the shades of intellectual growth in mankind. To man is reserved the right of judgment in all things relating to earth, his life thereon, and the more advanced stages of spiritual development which it is his destiny to pass through. In all of which man is the judge of his brother man, and, through him God works in every sphere, high and low; but, as man, the spiritualised entity becomes wiser in the spheres of advanced knowledge, he loses all arrogance towards those less enlightened than he is, and appeals to the love principle of his nature for that which, hitherto, he arrogated as a right. I see that your minds are conflicted with certain ideas, which we had before given you our opinion upon. Do not allow any doctrine whatever, or any statement, from whatever source it comes, to warp your judgment or cloud your reason. Think deeply and analyse every saying that purports to come from spirit realms, and let your reason decide, for in that will truth appear to you, and be, in fact, the only truth you are fit to receive.

THEOBALD.

Beloved Friends,—He who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven," felt the Divine Spirit of Love within Him, and knew, from intuition and experience, that all men are but children in the knowledge of things relating to their inner life—(the true man and woman principle of their nature)—and that all who would learn of this true life must have the pure and simple mind of a child, with its reposing confidence, and its desire for truth; but how the best efforts of many are baulked in the race after this knowledge by their supposed efficiency, resting upon the base of preconceived notions. Were it possible for man to obliterate all previous errors from his mind and experience, then might he be able to receive the impressions of a higher realm, and from minds advanced beyond the earth-state, more clearly; but, until he can do so, the truth must flow to him obliquely; man progresses in the earth-life and benefits by experience Upon the ruins of old temples he builds still fairer edifices that serve their purposes, and when that is achieved they give way beneath the still more convincing evidences, and form a base for another; thus, you see, dear friends, truth is progressive to you, but strictly speaking, you are progressive and truth is stationery. You perceive it as one in a boat perceives the opposite shore.

R. W.

Poetry.

THE MOUNTAIN PATH.

BY MARY F. DAVIS.

Shadows crept along the valley, sunshine played upon the green,
On the boughs the leaflets parted, showing flecks of cloud between,
Dimpling brooklets floated onward where the wandering breezes sigh,
Flowrets breathed their sweet-toned welcome to the children passing by.

In that valley, shadow-haunted, listening to the water's chime,
Listening to the many whispers telling of a fadeless clime,
Suddenly my soul was lifted as on amber-tinted wings,
And my heart was filled with sunlight, such as joy supernal brings.

For a voice broke on the stillness full of tenderness and truth,
Breathing words my spirit pined for in the years of blighted youth,
Calling me to leave the valley and the mists that roll below—
Leave the dim, sequestered arbors, and the waters' plaintive flow.

Eyes there were that beamed upon me through the pale and pensive light,
Earnest, loveful, calm, and holy, like the stars upon the night;
And a voice of sweeter music than the song of bird or tree,
Whispered: "Darling, leave the valley, climb the mountain-top with me."

Silently we sought the pathway Nature's loving hand had wrought;
Sweetly fond the gentle tokens by her forest minstrels brought;
Glad and gay and hushed and tender were the notes she chanted there,
And the mountain path was sacred as a holy shrine of prayer.

Hand in hand we hasten'd onward where the eagle led the way,
Scaled the grand and glorious summit resting in the lap of day,
Stood upon the moss-grown carpet, stood where man has seldom trod,
And with reverent brows uncovered, in that hour we worshipped God.

The "Spiritual Magazine" for August devotes twelve pages to an able review 'by Thomas Brevoir" of Sargeant Cox's "Spiritualism answered by Science."

To Correspondents.

Communications for insertion in this Journal should be plainly written, and as concise as possible.

THE SANDHURST SPIRIT HAND, AND THE MELBOURNE PUBLIC DISCUSSION.

"The same reason exists now for the performances of miracles, as did in any former period. What was the object of miracles? Is there not the same demand for benevolence now that there ever was? Was it to dispel doubt about the divine origin of the messenger? Does not the same doubt exist? And is it not as necessary to dispel doubt in one period, as at another? Was it to establish Christianity? But have they done it? Is not Christianity a controvertable subject? Has not the great body of mankind neglected it? Whatever then be the object of miracles, whether it be to mitigate suffering, dispel doubt, or establish Christianity, the same reason now exists that ever did. If miracles were ever performed, unless God is an irrational being, He would have them performed now."

"The Methodists of Wesley's day, were Spritualists—see Fletcher's account of spirit manifestations in Wesley's family. The Spiritualists of to-day believe more than our modern Methodists, and on better proof. For their additional belief they bring stronger evidence than that upon which Christianity is received—*living for dead witnesses.* Their arguments are irresistable. You doubt certain points, and demand proof. They show that you already believe other similar points, and they ask you on what evidence. If you reply, and inform them, they show you similar evidence, *and much stronger; and you must believe.* Hence the unprecedented spread of modern Spiritualism; *and on them, as reformers, our hopes rest.*"—An Eye-opener, by Zepa, pages 77 and 161.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

I do not agree with the general sentiments of the book from which I have taken the above quotation. I simply cull sufficient from its pages to suit my purpose, and with which, I do agree. I am one of those, who regard the authentic record of the appearance of the spirit hand, whether in Sandburst or Babylonish history, as equally miraculous.

I was glad to see you acted upon the suggestion of my letter in your last issue, and placed the fact at Sandhurst, still further beyond doubt. But what have the Melbourne gentlemen who attended the public discussion, and proved themselves so ready at the "hoarse laugh" now to say to the matter.

Will they claim to be sane men, and yet remain of opinion that the three respectable, credible witnesses, given in your last number, were deceived, or deceiving, together with more than a million of equally credible witnesses, which credible history records, as having witnessed the same phenomena in late years. It is said those laugh best, who laugh last. If some Spirit would dispel the shameful ignorance of modern history; and if the unquestioned facts of modern history were more generally known, would it not be as clear as noon-day, that, that credulity was the weaker, and more laughable, which gravely believed Mr. Tyerman advanced a false story about a spirit hand at Sandhurst, in support of his theory? I was told by a gentlemen present at the discussion, that the idea of the truth of this story, was laughed at, and scouted by all except the Spiritualists.

Now, Mr. Editor, instead of letting the matter drop, I wish to attempt to utilise, both the Sandhurst fact, and the Melbourne "hoarse laugh"—for I cannot help suspecting that the determined incredulity, has its foundation, in a similar incredulity, respecting the hand mentioned in Old Testament history, and this latter incredulity, would carry with it much more, of a mischievous nature to the individual, and to the commonwealth. To establish faith in the modern supernatural and miraculous, is of necessity, to establish thereby and at the same time, faith in the ancient similar supernatural and miraculous phenomena. In this way the revival, and further consideration of the subject may be useful.

Mr. Howitt in his history of the supernatural, very nicely expresses this sentiment,—in the 221 page of first volume:—"Those who deny modern marvels, must in their hearts deny similar, but greater things in the Bible. To those however, who have seen, and therefore believe in these modern cases, the belief in the miracles of the Bible, becomes a matter of course, *and their Christianity receives a new confirmation; and one, amongst many answers is given to the question 'Cui bono.'* Let the Protestant Churches look to it, who have voluntarily abandoned all claims to miracles, and tongues, and gifts of healing, and of discerning of spirits, for as sure as they are without these, they are but withered figtrees, about which Christ has left express orders. Hence it is that Catholics have declared that Protestantism is no true faith, for it is destitute of God's great criterion, "*the existence of miracles in it;*" and hence the Catholics have always declared that Protestantism is but a slippery pathway to Deism, and the Protestant faith has but too fully proved the truth of the accusation.'. There is one fact which I think has not been sufficiently noticed in the writings and lectures of the Spiritualists —it is this—The wonderful (I do say positive *expressio falsi*, but nearly the same thing), *suppressio veri,* on the part of both pulpit and press, concerning the various classes of super-mundane wonders, which it is now pleasing God to work amongst the inhabitants of the earth. They will suggest nonsensical and ridiculously insufficient causes for the effects, but they invariably, and slyly, and unblushingly, keep out of sight, and make no mention of the exact, and particular kind of effects they so cleverly suggest a sufficient cause for. If they were to specify the exact kind of phenomena to be covered, their pretended sufficient cause would appear not only insufficient, but it would seem as though it were impossible to add to that insufficiency, and by consequence their assumed cleverness would wear the aspect of "great stupidity." This is lifting the veil, and exposing the cause of their wonderful silence upon the great fact of modern miracles at Sandhurst, Castlemaine, and throughout the earth's wide circle. As the anti-Spiritualists cannot (upon their own creed and philosophy) account for these phenomena, they are driven to ignoring them.

"W." by his letter in your last issue, drew attention to a striking instance of this nature, where the Very Rev. the Dean of Melbourne had sought to ignore the fact of Mr. Home's levitation in the presence of two Lords, by supposing their sense of sight had deceived them.

In support of the probability and credibility of the levitation, and of the improbability and incredibility of the Lordly deception, twenty other levitations of the same gentleman were alluded to, as mentioned in his work, nine years in publication. Mr. "W." might have said more than this, for he will find, that it was given in evidence before the London Dialectical Society, and published in their report that one hundred levitations have occurred during the lifetime of Mr. Home, and before witnesses. Let us take one more glance at these gentlemen so fond of ignoring awkward facts, in relation to their own philosophy. How comes it to pass that the *Argus* does not report the miraculous occurrences at Sandhurst and Castlemaine, lately appearing in the *Harbinger of Light?* Is not such refusal to publish such facts, tantamount, and equal to, that journal's Bible oath, that these miracles do not take place, but that the Chairman of the circle and his co-witnesses who report them, are fools or liars? Thus is the acceptation of the public, guided, governed, and misled, by such journals. Let these facts be mentioned to the first hundred people met with in the street, not more than one would believe them. Who is to blame for their ignorance of existing facts in the world, but the Press and the Pulpit. It is mere subterfuge for the *Argus* to pretend that such subjects are unimportant, for it stands to reason that "*other sciences fade before the greater question of humanity's future—Whence do we come? Whither do we go? The Spiritualists believe they are lifting the curtain that has, hitherto, obscured our knowledge of these great questions.*" It must also stand to reason, even in the estimation of the *Argus*, that manifestations of the supernatural, directly bear upon, and have relation to, those great questions. The *Argus*, like the Pulpit, is in the place, where it is demanded of conscience to speak the truth, and therefore, I repeat, the distinction becomes nice, between the *suppressio veri,* and the *expressio falsi.* I cannot help thinking those will be happier, and enjoy more peace of mind, to whose philosophy these ever re-

curring miracles, ***administer no reproof and ask for no hiding place for that reason.***

Mr. S. B. Brittan has let the light of Heaven shine down upon the why and the wherefore of this "OMINOUS," and very extraordinary, anti-spiritualistic "DEAD SILENCE," in a few well chosen words. I cannot conclude this letter better than by quoting them:—

"The savans, who have been accustomed to call loudly for facts, are for the most part dumb, now that facts are likely to explode some of their material conclusions, and flee from their presence as from a magazine of curses. There are honorable exceptions I am happy to acknowledge, but generally they are anxious to keep out of sight of facts, *as hypocrites to evade the terror of the last judgment.* But facts are of too frequent occurrence to escape observation, or to leave the candid inquirer without the grounds of a rational conviction.

These facts must inevitably *strengthen the believers in revealed religion,* and they especially have a more than mortal interest in this discussion and the issues involved in the great question. If it was a miracle for Peter to walk on the water, and for Phillip to be taken up in the air and borne away, it is no less a miracle that the bodies of the Seeress of Provorst, Peter of Alcantra, St. Therasa, D. D. Home, and Henry Godon, are made to float in the air in modern times, and before the eyes of the living.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

CALDECOTT.

CO-OPERATION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—It is very gratifying to see that the Spiritualists are on the move with regard to co-operation. This is, without exception one of the wisest steps they have taken, for several reasons:—First, because action is required as well as talk to benefit mankind; secondly, because the working classes are brutalized by excessive labour and poverty; and thirdly, because social and physical evil must be removed before the masses of the people can become really virtuous and moral, and true morality is the only sure and solid foundation on which to erect the beautiful superstructure of true piety and holiness. I think it may be advisable to have at least one co-operative association under the direct control of the Spiritists, because they are thorough progressionists and have decided to throw to the winds all old foolish ideas, creeds, and dogmas, and to free themselves at once and for ever from the iron grasp of priestcraft which has warped, stunted, and crushed the human mind for ages, and *dared* to call reason carnal—God's best and noblest gifts to man. But this association should merely be a leader or forerunner, and when thoroughly established it must assist all kindred associations, whether they be Spiritists or not, or it will fail to fulfil its glorious mission. My beloved Spiritists, if we can accomplish this noble task, we shall have done more for humanity than orthodoxy has done for the last eighteen hundred years, and more than ten thousand Bismarks, without shedding one drop of human blood.

Some people have thought that preaching the orthodox gospel would remove the cause of all evil, but this is a sad mistake, because it is impossible for men, with advanced minds and lovers of truth to believe that gospel, it is so contradictory and absurd taken as a whole. Thousands of our best and cleverest men have been driven to the barren wastes of scepticism through preaching that stereotyped gospel, and thousands more are on the road through the ignorance and shortsightedness of those who ought to know better. I think about three-fourths of the working classes are sceptical on some of the leading dogmas of the orthodox religion, every year they are losing confidence in the clergy and the Bible, but I am happy to say that they are putting more confidence in the true and living God, who speaks to them through nature's infallible laws, and by his bright messengers of love and truth; they begin to see that if man was just to himself and to his fellow man all would be comparatively happy, even on earth, therefore, they are not afraid to trust that loving Father in the future. The clergy worship at the shrine of gold, the rich men sit in the front seats of our churches and the poor men behind the door, the rich members are often visited while living and finally they are buried by a bishop in a most pompous manner, while the poor man, although he may be as pure as the dew-drop, is neglected in life and ultimately disposed of at death in a most businesslike manner by a layman; thus, gold is worshipped, while the produce of all wealth is neglected and despised. I heard of a clergyman the other day, in Liverpool, who preached a sermon on the blessings of poverty, surely he must be an expert at his profession, and I suppose his next attempt will be to preach a sermon on the devil and prove him to be a saint and a gentlemen; one is just as reasonable as the other. If the clergy would assist in framing wise and progressive laws to remove the cause of evil, instead of its effects, and not waste their precious talents and time in preaching such arrant nonsense and pulling long faces, happiness, peace, and plenty would soon encircle the earth like the atmosphere.

A WORKING MAN.

CUI BONO?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—Many persons anxiously looked forward to the late discussion between Messrs. Tyerman and Blair, hoping that they would learn what Spiritualism is. Others expected to see the whole thing exposed and destroyed, root and branch. Both parties must have been thoroughly disappointed. Spiritualists themselves learnt nothing, unless they learnt the only lesson capable of being learnt, viz.:—that such discussions will never do any good. But it is essential that the world should know what Spiritualism is; what it means; and to the individual man as well as to the human family "cui bono." Let me try if I, at least, can "rehearse the articles of my belief."

Spiritualism teaches:— First—To love God— That thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul, and strength; and secondly—Thy neighbour as thyself. These two doctrines are the beginning and end of Spiritualism. But between these extremes are other points of faith of vital importance. Spiritualism proves the immortality of the soul; the capability of the spirit returning to earth and communicating with man; and the identity of the spirit to all eternity. It teaches that man must work out his own salvation, progressing, step by step, till he shall be perfect even as the angels in Heaven. Discarding the idea of a material Hell, it nevertheless holds that man pays the penalties of his transgressions, both in this life as well as, more or less, in the life to come. Upholding the doctrine of the Jew, it bows its head to the command of God, when he says—"Thou shalt have none other God but me." Carried out to its logical conclusion, Spiritualism is perfected Christianity; a step in advance to the great end, superseding the past, as itself will, even in this world, be succeeded by a state of higher purity of worship and morals, as the mind and soul of man will be prepared to occupy the more exalted position.

Spiritualism means love and good will to man; the amelioration of the whole race; the establishment of an universal brotherhood; the doing good for the sake of doing good, thy right hand not knowing what thy left hand doeth; true equality where each shall do his share of work, the only pre-eminence allowed being that of goodness and intellect. This is no absurdity, but it is the realization of "the time" long foretold, long coming but inevitable in its advent, "when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

That Spiritualism will pass through trials and great suffering must be expected. Assuredly, affliction will come, but let us teach our detractors the lesson of forgiveness, even as Christ Jesus taught us by precept and by example. Be not so quick to take offence and give the retort uncourteous—remembering that many of the best men living believe Spiritualism the work of the

Devil himself (a mighty Devil that selfsame myth, fearful as the evil that is round us in stern reality). "Be not too tame either," but cultivate a courage if you have it not, seizing each opportunity of proving our faith by the exercise of its opposite virtue of every vice brought to bear against us. To falsehood, oppose truth; to anger, good temper; to malice, goodwill; and to slander, forgiveness.

This is Spiritualism as I understand it. If it be not so, "I'll none of it."

But I feel that I am right, and that I have answered my query, "Cui bono?"

With your permission, I may say somewhat more, but with the distinct understanding that I enter not into any discussion such as we have recently experienced, where, of each combatant, it might be truly said, he fought "as one that smiteth the air.

I remain, Sir,

Very truly yours,

Sept. 1st, 1872. SERVIR LE ROI.

THE DEAN OF MELBOURNE AND MODERN MIRACLES.

No. 2.

CONTRA.

"But the Scripture speaks of other miracles of a similar character bearing a striking resemblance to that of the modern manifestations to the miracles of the New Testament." . . . "Now we are not told whether these wonders of the magicians were done by the slight of the hand, by the misapplication of scientific knowledge, or by satanic agency. The same reticence is observed in numerous passages which refer to similar powers." . . . "It appears, therefore, the question is of no religious importance, whether the answers are dictated by Satan himself, or by the spirits of dead men and women, or by the deliberate fraud of the agents, or by muscular, nervous, mesmeric magnetic, or any other species of excitement." . . . "*To us as Christian moralists the enquiry is unimportant, whether certain results are obtained by communication with the spirit-world.*"—The Dean of Melbourne's Pamphlet on Spiritualism.

"Mankind clothe their ignorance by the all-pervading word "mystery,' which is but another name for ignorance When they feel a subject baffling their powers of comprehension, they are ever ready to exclaim—'It is a great mystery beyond the ken of reason, *and it is a great sacrilege to attempt to reveal it*, for God has concealed it from human efforts.'"—Exposition of Spiritualism by Sceptic, page 318.

"We witnessed at the Davenport Brothers last night things not dreamed of in any philosophy of which we have knowledge: to us they are unaccountable. We do not profess to understand them, or attempt to suggest any theory of explanation. *We would advise the public to let the manifestations pass without excitement, or puzzling their brains about the rationale of the phenomena.*"—Gatesburg Free Democrat, August 27th, 1863.

PRO.

"If it be true, that can only be ascertained by investigation; in either case; therefore, all good citizens, all intelligent minds, should unite 'n ascertaining the truth or falsity of this great phenomena—the greatest of this, or any preceding age."—Spiritualism, by Edmonds and Dexter, page 423.

"The first point requisite is to convince men's minds of the Divine authenticity of revelation. There are but three ways that I am aware of by which this fact can be demonstrated. These, being inspiration, miracles, and a return of the dead, i.e. of departed spirits to bear witness to their existence and condition beyond the grave."—Scepticism and Spiritualism, page 142.

There is a deep sacredness about the perceptions and senses of the sane man and the sane mind, which, under some circumstances, it is well nigh impious to question. . . . It comes to us with as much conclusiveness as can be reasonably attached to records of an ancient period. If the inspiration of the present age be rejected by the churches, how can they believe in the inspiration of the past? If they repudiate the manifestations of to-day, how can they consistently receive those of other periods and of a semi-barbarous people?—J. H. Robinson's Introduction oo the Religion of Manhood.

If the proofs of their occurrence be perfectly legitimate, the nature of the facts themselves cannot be admitted as a valid reason for refusing to accept them as facts. Evidence, if it be otherwise trustworthy, is not invalidated by the unlikelihood of that which it attests. What, then, is wanted here is to treat facts as facts, and not decide the question over the head of the evidence. To say that certain phenomena are incredible is merely to say that they are inconsistent with the present state of our knowledge.—Cornhill Magazine for August, 1860.

But be the cause what it may that moves them, when men persistently and recklessly vilify those great and wonderful evidences of a good and beneficent spiritual outpouring, it is our part in justice and fraternal feeling to warn them, that now, as of old, they are fighting against the living God.—American Spiritualism, by E. Hardinge, page 345.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

Sir—In my last communication I estimated the sum total of modern miracles throughout the world to amount to about a million per diem, more or less, but, from the foregoing extracts, opinions would appear to differ as to whether we should concern ourselves about such trifles, some raising their voices "FOR" such concern, and others "AGAINST" it.

I confess myself on the side of the pros, but it will be observed the Dean holds hard and fast with the Gatesburg "Free Democrat" in advising people to allow these million of miracles per diem to "*pass without excitement, or puzzling their brains about the rationale of the phenomena.*"

However, it aids the faith of the Spiritualist to find that he recognises in the phenomena a "striking resemblance to the miracles of the New Testament," and supposes it to be of the same nature with certain miraculous power recorded in sacred writ. It is a further aid to the faith of the Spiritualist to know that he acknowledges the origin of this miraculous power to be inscratable to the mind of the anti-spiritualist. The sentiments of one Divine might not be regarded as of importance, but I write under the other assumption, that I reply to and refer to the attitude of her ministers of the churches, and indeed their orthodox members generally, as we listen to the every day expressed sentiments of those around us. To many the very idea of a modern miracle from any source, and therefore the whole subject matter of my last communication would be regarded as (to use a vulgarism) "bosh."

However, giving the Dean credit for right judgment, miracles may, and do, now occur from some source. This much granted it follows that such miracles must be either many or few in number; and, if so, it was not altogether waste of time to inquire "how about that matter," by turning over a few of the last pages of this world's history. I found them to be a great many, and the question I propose to confine myself to in this letter is as to whether we should, or should not, concern ourselves about them. The tone of conversation is decidedly *with the Dean and the Gatesburg "Free Democrat."*

I have said I am on the other side, and "FOR" the deepest and closest enquiry, and warmest interest. Apart from the vastness of the bare thought of sighting the eternal shore, apart from the vastness of our stake in such a question, do not certain aspects of the question crop up before the eyes of the anti-spiritualist, which go far to establish prima-facie evidence that there is a serious flaw in his theory, that these phenomena are not God-sent miracles? The evidence of that flaw consists in the CONFLICTING OPINIONS of those who deny the hand of God herein. If they take three CONFLICTING VIEWS, two-thirds of them must of necessity be wrong; and if two-thirds are wrong, why not the whole? Here is a serious subject for the reflection of those who are "AGAINST" enquiry.

For the instruction of such as are in the dangerous position of non-enquirers I quote from the 185th page of "Sceptics" Exposition of Spiritualism:—"If the anti-spiritualists would just pause and look at one another they could not readily see a more diverting spectacle, or how completely they are verifying the old adage—Give a man rope enough, &c. Now Spiritualism can be but one thing, but anti-spiritualists have made it out to be already a dozen different things. With one it is nothing at all; with a second it is the Devil; with a third it is Reichenbach's od-force, and a very odd force it must be to be half the forces they say it is. It has been proved that the spirits tell us things which no one present knows; shall we not rather believe them than believe the miscellaneous, motley, conflicting mob, who show themselves so utterly ignorant of what these intelligences are, that they attribute them to a score of vague causes?" That this diversity of sentiment exists in the anti-spiritualistic camp is a fact beyond dispute, and common sense should dictate to any man there sheltering himself that there is "*something rotten in the state of Denmark.*" Reasonable alarm, motives of self interest, and present and future happiness, and loyalty to the supreme disposer of events, unite in urging him to wake up, and heedless of the injunctions of the churches and "Free

Democrats" enquire into the rationale of the phenomena."

The pamphlet before me is in one respect very true to the tone of the theology of all the churches, and equally true to the tone of conversation in all classes of society, except perhaps they are not quite so frank as the Dean, whose honest avowal is to this effect:—"*I must confess that regarding what has been said in the Quarterly Review for October on the one hand, and Dr. Boake on the other, I am unable to arrive at a certain conclusion, and, for reasons stated, do not feel it necessary to do so.*" I argue that this weak point on the anti-spiritualistic side should be a strong point on the side of the Spiritualists. If they are so far staggered by the phenomena as to be "unable to arrive at certain conclusions" we may hope to make converts of them.

This inability to arrive at certain conclusions was what struck me as I first glanced over the pamphlet. It will be seen that, in that portion of the pamphlet quoted at the head of this letter, the Dean enumerates a great variety and diversity of possible causes of spiritualistic phenomena, as held by different people, but he elects none of them for his own adoption. He holds that the modern phenomena resembles that produced by Jannes and Jambres, but he does not state that it is of the same nature with that which it resembles. The Dean further distinctly states that, if it were of the same nature with that exhibited by Jannes and Jambres, it would not therefore be evidently Satanic, because the origin is not disclosed. At the worst, therefore, the Spiritualists may console themselves that they are a long way off the Devil. At the same time it must be noted that if the Dean's statements are not killing *his inferences are severe.*

I have mentioned one omission in the pamphlet—the omission to answer one question which is the whole question—What is the cause of these wonderful phenomena? I now wish to mention another omission, which seems equally great. In my last communication I spoke of the daily occurrence of about half a score distinct classes of modern miracles. The pamphlet does not mention any of them. The Dean is frightened to play upon the guitars, but I love to harp upon this music from heaven. It is in this way Spiritualists and anti-spiritualists are ever at cross purposes. The Spiritualist triumphantly advances his stock wonders as the evidences of his faith. The anti-spiritualist is struck dumb, and shifts the subject if possible to a doctrine or dogma of faith. Let me suppose some poor honest member of the Church of England confounded at the hearing of all such wonders as I mentioned in my last letter, and hearing that the Dean of his church had addressed himself to the subject, he purchases the pamphlet to learn the truth of the matter, but, lo! from the first to the last page there is no spirit voice, nor a note of angelic music, nor a glimpse of a spirit hand, such as they get at Sandhurst. He feels naturally disposed to put down the pamphlet and exclaim—'but, Mr. Dean, what I wanted to know was did they see the spirit hands at Sandhurst and elsewhere?' or, to illustrate more clearly the omission I allude to in this and all other pamphlets and lectures of the kind I have met with, I will be a little extravagant in the suggestion of an hypothesis to serve my purpose. Suppose a sect sprang up whose articles of faith did not count up to thirty-nine, but which held that faith could move mountains, and pointed to the phenomena of their having moved Mount Dandenong and Mount Macedon to the immediate vicinity of the You Yangs, as an attestation of the Divine origin of their teachings. The Dean again writes a pamphlet to controvert the doctrines of this sect which cuts short the thirty-nine articles. The same poor man, member of his church, again purchases the pamphlet, hoping this time to have these mountain movements explained, but, lo! no mention of either mount. Again he goes to the Dean, who informs him that the origin of the movements of Jannes and Jambres is not revealed. Again the poor man exclaims—"but, Mr. Dean, I hoped to have heard from you; and what I wanted to learn from you was, what you did know about the movements of Mounts Dandenong and Macedon at the present time; not how much you did not know about the movements of Jannes and Jambres in time so long past." I repeat that this kind of shirking the facts that disturb men's minds, this kind of omission to notice the *mountain movements of the present day*, characterises the anti-spiritualistic pamphlets, lectures, sermons, and after dinner conversations.

I now leave this part of the subject and pass on to point out certain reasons why it is to the last degree improbable that evil influences are at work as the origin of modern spiritual communion and phenomena; but, before I do so, I would again remark that the Dean does not declare that the origin of this phenomena is satanic, only that it may be, from its resemblance to other phenomena that may be satanic, and which is recorded in the Scripture without a revealed origin. As a Spiritualist, therefore, I shall give myself the benefit of the doubt, and proceed to show the most direct improbability of evil origin and influence, and also the most direct evidence of good origin and influence.

I have not myself been so fortunate as to have been in the habit of witnessing spiritual phenomena, but those who have enjoyed those advantages are constantly giving expressions to such sentiments as the following, which I quote—"I therefore state that at the sittings that I have attended, I have never heard a sound or seen a sight antagonistic to purity, but on the contrary, I have been advised to prayer, to Bible reading, to repose in Christ, duties I had grossly neglected. I would frankly state that I was rapidly imbibing materialism, and that that belief was acting in my actions. When I heard of spirit-power manifestations I felt that, if true, they would hue in pieces the upas tree of materialism. I sought and found; and not that only, but the *Bible was ordered to be put on the table*, and the medium, with closed eyes and averted head, was acted on by an unseen power (as the quakers were said to be in olden time), and, with agitated hand, was made to turn over the leaves. His finger then stiffened, and he pointed to the open page and verse—'Heard a voice saying this is my beloved Son—*I am come that ye might have life*,' and so on to a number of passages. In every instance the finger rested on a verse that *contained the principle that Christ was the Son of God*." . . "I am interested, as I suppose ten thousand others are, in the investigation of Spiritualism simply as an honest enquiry after truth, and only desirous of keeping the windows of my mind open in all directions. It is a subject that can only fail to *be profoundly interesting to the fool, the infidel, or the scoffer*." This last sentiment is so exactly to my mind that I am desirous of not lessening its effect by adding more. In conclusion let me refer all who regard spiritualistic phenomena as "*humbug*" to this pamphlet. They will find that the Dean of Melbourne judges those phenomena to be miracles of a character distinctly spoken of as such in the Scriptures.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant, W.

A WORD OF CAUTION AND ADVICE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—The desire of all Spiritualists should be to see their glorious movement grow up as the most liberal, tolerant, humane, and progressive movement in the world. It has within it all the elements to make it this, if caution and judgment are exercised in their development; but, like all other new movements, it has in it and about it certain elements of weakness and danger. I believe, for reasons which I need not state, that a word of caution and advice will be seasonable just now. There are three sources of danger that I wish more particularly to point out in this letter. In the first place there is a danger of *relying too implicitly on the Spirit teachings we receive.* We should never forget that our Spirit friends are still fallible beings, and therefore may err in their communications. Our own judgment must be used in our continued investigations. All the leading writers on Spiritualism urge the importance of testing everything that purports to be a Spirit communication by an enlightened reason; and experience has fully proved the wisdom of their advice. If we blindly surrender our reason, and accept everything that comes without question, we open the door for the wildest vagaries, and the most pernicious fanaticism. Any Spirit

that demands implicit reliance on all its teachings, and to that extent the abnegation of our selfhood, may well be suspected. The best and most advanced Spirits wish to raise us by elevating and extending the dominion of reason, thus enabling us to separate truth from error, good from evil; and not be enlarging our credulity, and multiplying the superstitions to which it gives birth.

A second source of danger is in *relying too confidently on our "impressions."* Our feelings and impressions, as well as the communications we receive, must be weighed in the balance of reason and common sense, or we shall be in danger of being led astray at times. Those who are desirous of being guided in their general conduct by their "impressions," should be very sure that they are *en rapport* with pure and wise Spirits, and that those Spirits are always with them; otherwise they are running great risk of self-destruction. Unless much care is exercised, we may attribute impressions to Spirits which really have their origin within ourselves, or in surrounding circumstances. That a time will come when we may pretty safely leave ourselves to the guidance, by teaching and impression, of our Spirit friends, I do not doubt; but that time is some distance off yet. There are few indeed, if any, who are already so far progressed, and so thoroughly *en rapport* with the Spirit world, as to justify them in passively acquiescing in all the communications they receive and the impressions they feel. Cases have occurred in which the blind, unquestioning trust, here condemned, has led to very unhappy consequences; and it is the knowledge of this that induces me to address a word of caution to those who may be in danger from the same cause.

A third source of danger is in *cultivating one phase of Spiritualism to the exclusion of any other phase.* Those who fall into this error are apt to undervalue and speak disparagingly of every form of Spiritualism but the one they like best; nay, they occasionally go so far as to regard their's as the only form of genuine Spiritualism.

But it is well to remember that Spiritualism is many sided. Its phenomena are very diversified; and it is well that it is so, for it thus meets the varied wants of mankind. We may have a decided preference for a certain phase of mediumship; or one class of manifestations, but we have no right to assume that the phase we prefer is the best, or the only one worthy of cultivation. The kinds of mediumship, and the various phenomena that we think objectionable or do not care about, may be the best adapted to convince and help many others. One aspect of Spiritualism must never be made a criterion by which to judge the system as a whole; nor must our limited individual experiences in the movement be made the measure of what is true and good in connection with it. In view of the adversity in the mental characteristics, education, religious opinions, and prejudices of men, we see the necessity of developing every possible phase of Spiritualism, in order to meet the manifold wants of mankind as they are found. Spirit teachings may satisfy some inquirers while physical manifestations are the best suited for others. Let both be cultivated and encouraged, and the abuse of each be carefully guarded against.

My only object in pointing out those sources of danger is to save spiritualism from more ridicule and opposition than it is already exposed to. It would be a sad day for spiritualism if, reason were surrendered at the shrine of "impression," and all "communications" were treated practically, as though they bore the stamp of infallibility. Our spirit friends mean to teach us pure truth and guide us aright, but their efforts on our behalf are limited by "conditions" which they cannot always control. Hence the necessity of keeping our eyes open, and our judgments unfettered by pet or special theories; and of subjecting every professedly spiritual communication and impression to the test of rigorous reason, instead of accepting it with blind implicit faith. The ultimate triumph of rationalistic and progressive spiritualism is certain; but its advancement will be retarded if its disciples fall into any of the dangers indicated. With the sole hope of preventing this, these words of friendly caution are addressed to my brother spiritualists.

Yours fraternally,

J. TYERMAN.

SPIRIT-PHOTOGRAPHY.

THE "London Photographic News," of June 28th, contains an interesting account of a series of experiments in spirit-photography, conducted by Mr. John Beattie and Mr. Josty, two experienced photographers, at the Studio of the latter, who was a thorough sceptic. It will be seen that some most startling results were obtained. The Editor after expressing his opinion that all the professed spirit-photographs he had previously seen, (both English and American) were manifest cheats, thus speaks of Mr. Beattie and his experiments:—

"Mr. Beattie is, as many of our readers know, an old and thoroughly experienced photographic portraitist, and a gentleman whose sincerity and honesty, as well as ability, no one would dream of doubting. Interested in the subject of Spiritualism, and disgusted with the transparent trickery of the 'spirit-photographs' brought under his attention, he resolved to investigate the subject experimentally. The result will be found in his narrative. It will be noted that in this case the inquiry is undertaken by honest inquirers, familiar with photographic operations and possibilities, for their own satisfaction, every possible source of error or deception being carefully eliminated. The issue was of a totally unlooked-for character, and the images totally unlike the conventional apparition so carefully imitated in the sham ghost pictures. As to the source or origin of the images we can offer no suggestion or theory."

The Editor gives a description of the pictures, and concludes:—

"Our duty, which, as we said at the outset, is simply to describe the results before us, is done. We have neither theory nor speculation to offer in explanation. The mere narration, in a candid spirit, of the facts before us will probably subject us to derision from some. There is a singular disparity between the abstract creed and the actual practical belief of the mass of mankind. The belief in a spiritual world is, happily, a widely-spread and general faith, held eagerly and tenaciously, whilst the mention of any tangible evidence on the subject is usually rejected with scorn. The notion that the spirits of the dead can present themselves to the living is not only embodied in the Christian faith, but is thoroughly interwoven into our habits of thought and our literature. At the same time, belief in any special proof of this belief is held to be weakness and superstition. Practically, the Sadducee is in the ascendant in our day. And whilst we have described with accuracy and honesty the startling results to which Mr. Beattie has called our attention, we are fully conscious of an under-current of doubt in our own mind, for which we feel, at the same time, without justification. To many of our readers our narrative must be simply a strange story without practical bearing. Whether further explanation will be forthcoming, and whether further development of the singular experiences may be in store we cannot say. The story, as it stands, is all we can now put on record."

The following is the account of the experiments referred to.

I have for long years been a careful observer of the singular phenomena which, until lately, have been looked upon by the scientific world as unworthy of investigation; but now they have been forced into the foreground, and claim to be fairly sifted and tested as to their truth.

Some time ago Mr. Crookes proved that under certain conditions a mechanical force was produced, which he called "new," and to which he gave a distinctive name.

Now, if the conception of the "unity of force" be true, having got one force we have got all force, if it be true that momemtum suddenly killed bursts forth into heat, light, and chemical action, and inversely so. Then, in the force demonstrated by Mr. Crookes to exist under the conditions spoken of, we have the root both of electrical and chemical force.

But I am not one of those who believe that all changes take place by a power, and not for a *purpose*. I am, therefore, compelled to associate with my idea of force the element of intelligence—force, as such, having no existence apart from intelligent condition. The experiments I have now to describe may or may not be new, but the results (I don't say "if true"—I *know* them to be so) prove much, namely, that, under given conditions, there is in existence an invisible agency capable of setting up powerful chemical action; but that is not all—that same energy is governed by an intelligence other than that visibly present, the forms produced being inconceivable by those visibly present.

With no more introduction, I will describe carefully my experiments.

I had a friend from London who came and let me see what he called "spirit-photographs" I at once said that they were not so, and told how they were made; seeing, however, that many believed in the possibility of such things, I said that I would try some experiments, as I knew of a good "medium"—Mr. Butland. After some advice, this gentleman agreed to try and spare the time. I next arranged with Mr. Josty to allow me to try the experiments in his house after six o'clock p.m., and I got Dr. Thompson and Mr. Tomy to assist me. I did all the work except uncapping the lens—that Mr. Josty did.

The camera used was one for taking three on one plate—a Ross's lens stopped down to about three-quarters of an inch. The light was subdued so as to lengthen the exposures to about four minutes.

We sat seventeen times with no result. On the eighteenth time a remarkable form came out quickly on the plate on the application of the developer—a most imperfect resemblance to a human

form. The first thing was, however, to sift and see if it could not be classed with the numerous ills photography is heir to, but no, we could find no category in which to place it, Up to this point Mr. Josty was laughing at the mere idea of trying such experiments, believing that a result was impossible.

Our next experiments took place one week after—myself, Mr. Tomy, and Mr. Butland being present, Dr. Thompson being then in London. The first plate showed no result; on the second plate was strange manifestations—on each exposure an illuminated bust, with hands crossed, and with luminous objects above, came out. Then for the next seven exposures the manifestations were extremely strange, as if a process of evolution were going on towards a perfect human figure; a star in one becomes in the next almost a head, and all seemingly the result of luminosity.

In the next set of experiments we got a series altogether different. First, a simple cone one inch long, and half an inch above it a short cone.* In the next these two objects radiate light. In the third they have changed their shape into one like a Florence flask, and the other like a star. In the fourth the same, only, on looking carefully, a duplicate of the star is seen. In the fifth the effect is exactly as if a piece of ignited magnesium wire had been dropped into them. The star is now like a luminous bird, and a flood of light flowing laterly from the other. The next experiments were made on a very wet day; twelve exposures, but no result.

In every case these impressions spring out instantly the developer touches the plate, *and in full printing force*. We have to wait for all other impressions on the same plate coming out. Observe, therefore, the impression must be the result of a very active energy.

I enclose you a set of prints, and I wish you to lay them out in a series before you begin to think upon them. This communication is already too long, but I must just say a word or two on what happened during the experiments. On the second evening, during the second exposure, Mr. Josty was sitting with the cap of the lens in his hand, Our attention was attracted by its falling from his hand. We looked, and he was lying in a profound fit or trance. When he recovered he was fearfully excited, and would not be calm until he went and saw that his wife was well, for he said she was standing by us in white; that was the last thing he remembered. Previously he would not believe it possible: afterwards he would not touch nor interfere with anything.

We are to continue these experiments. They were begun to satisfy ourselves, and you have the result. Spirit-photography is to me, if nothing more occur, a possibility, and the existence of unseen intelligent beings a fact. JOHN BEATTIE.

SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS AT CASTLEMAINE.

In our last issue, we briefly noticed some extraordinary physical manifestations, said to have occurred at Castlemaine. We now copy from the *M. A. Mail*, of August 27th and 28th, the letters of the three gentlemen who witnessed them, from which it will be seen that there can be no reasonable doubt of the *bona fide* nature of the manifestations which are totally inexplicable on any other theory than the Spiritual one.

A SEANCE

SIR,—On Sunday evening, the 4th August, I, in company with Mr. E., and Mr. and Mrs. H., went to the house of Mr. P., for the purpose of witnessing some manifestations reported as extraordinary and unaccountable. Not being gifted with that imaginative organism that can realise any of the modern spiritualistic theories, I always looked on such reports and manifestations as rubbish and nonsense. The evening was very dark and wet, and about eight o'clock we reached in a body the house of Mr. P., where we were ushered into a room, where there was no fire in the fireplace. The room was carpeted, the walls were plastered and papered, the ceiling was plastered, and there was a French window leading on to the verandah. This window was nailed tight, and the door was bolted by me. The furniture in the room consisted of six chairs, a round table (uncovered), and a sofa, and thin muslin curtains adorned the window. We took our seats round the table, and having provided ourselves with lucifer matches, the candles were blown out; and, after quarter of an hour or twenty minutes, the table resounded with a heavy hard blow. We lit the candle and saw half a brick, with some wood ashes on it, and some scattered on the table. On touching the brick it was found to be warm, and one side of it so hot as to be unbearable on the palm of the hand. A short time after the light was again put out, Mrs. P. made an exclamation that there was something coming, and we heard a gentle knock on the table, and on lighting we found on the table a flower-pot, full of earth, with a layer of ten leaves on the top, and seeds sprouting into leaves, the whole dripping wet. In consequence of Mrs. P.'s exclamation, I got up and examined the window, and found it fastened and nailed, and impossible to open without being unnailed. After some conversation wherein Mr. P. was relating to me some manifestations supposed to have arisen from the influence of his sister-in-law, the light was again put out, and no sooner out than a photograph album was flung on the table, and on the light being struck the book was found *opening*, and Mr. P. putting his finger on the open portrait; said, "That is the lady I was telling you about." After this a large fir cone was flung on the table under similar circumstances, and after a further trial without results we gave it up.

In giving this recital, I merely state facts as they occurred, without hazarding any conjecture as to the cause. The thing was totally unintelligible to any of us. We entered the house scoffing, and full of suspicion, and came away satisfied that what was done was no wilful trick or legerdemain on the part of our hosts.

R. C.

MR. C. P. H.'S TESTIMONY.

On the Sunday previous to the first narrated of the seances, I visited the house of Mr. P. for the purpose of seeing some of the manifestations of a not understood force. My mind was filled with the idea of trap-doors and slip panels as a solution to the mystery, but, to borrow the words of Mr. E., "I never had such a take down as on entering the modestly furnished apartment." The room is composed of weatherboard, brick, and plaster lined. The ceiling is without ornamentation, and perfectly free from even a suspicion of any aperture. On the walls were hung two pictures, and on the mantelpiece two China vases containing feathers. The furniture fully furnished the small room, although it only consisted of one uncovered table without any drawer, five chairs, which we occupied, and one small horsehair stuffed sofa. I and Mrs. H., and also the one Chinese I took with me, at my direction examined the room minutely; indeed, so much so that I apologised to Mr. and Mrs. P. for such an appearance of doubt as to trickery. With a lantern I quite as minutely examined the walls outside, and the boards, unless at the usual places, were as devoid of joints as was Joseph's coat The windows were formed of two small glass doors. *nailed* tightly together with *four nails* at four different places. I fastened the door securely, but, resolving that nothing should come that way, I directed the Chinese to put his chair within two or three inches of the door, and he did so, I meantime drawing the table towards it. Mrs. P. proposed to seat herself facing the window. I said "No," and asked her to take the other side of the table, which she did, between the Chinese and Mrs. H., I having M. P. on my right. After placing our hands on the table knocks and scratchings were heard, and I then blew out the candle, but kept matches near me. In a few minutes I received a blow on the chest, and it certainly came from above. I struck a light and saw in my lap a long handled broad bushy brush. The light was again extinguished, and Mrs. H. shortly afterward gave a cry of fear, saying, "there is something hovering over and touching my head." I had a match in my hand, and lit it before the article had ceased to move. We saw the hat of Mrs. H. come down slanting, and fall by her side on the floor. Again putting out the light, in about ten minutes we heard a slight tap on the table. I struck a light, and close to the place where the points of my fingers had been was a large vessel one-third full of liquid. The liquid was perfectly motionless. It was then proposed to show us the effect of the force on a small table. I *unfastened* the door, and Mrs. P. carried the table in from an adjoining room, I watching her the whole time. The door was again fastened, and the Chinese stood with his back against it. Mr. P. held the lit candle in a bedroom candlestick with both hands, and Mrs. P., Mrs. H., and myself put our hands on the table. Its vibrations and agitations I can only compare to the conduct of a racehorse impatient of control at the start. I was apprehensive Mrs. H. would be terrified, and removed my hands, as I thought to decrease the force. I was looking in the face of Mrs. H., endea-

* This alludes to the size of the negative.

voring to see if she was agitated in her mind, and at that moment Mrs. H. had her hand on the table at one end, and Mrs. P. had hers on the other end of the table which was so small that in slightly leaning forward their heads almost touched. Mrs. H. and Mrs. P. simultaneously uttered a cry of alarm and I saw a black bottle lying on the middle of the table on its side. It was no sooner in that position than it, without being touched by any one of us, assumed an upright condition. I asked for an explanation of the alarm. Mrs. H. said, "I saw something black coming swiftly by the shoulder of Mrs. P., (behind whom the Chinese was standing.) Mrs. P. said, "I thought it was a snake crawling round my neck," During the whole time of this occurrence I was close to the table, which was knocking against me, but my hands was not on it. I felt a little excited and requested that the seance close. We adjourned to the other room, and the bottle was opened and found to contain wine. Mrs. H. took a seat in an American cane easy chair, but the chair and herself were propelled to and fro so violently that I changed places with her, and while sitting on the sofa she was similarly moved. We left astonished at our first experiences, and convinced of tle impossibility of trickery. On reaching home Mrs. M. was unable to sit for a long time as she found she was still moved in the same way, and on touching the supper table with hands the effect was much like that of a strong electric current suddenly applied to an individual, and had not a bystander quickly laid hold of the lamp it would have been toppled over. In about three hours this phenomenon passed away from Mrs. H.

MR. J. S. E.'S TESTIMONY.

On the evening of Tuesday, 6th August, accompanied by Mr. G. W. C. and Mr. and Mrs. H., I visited the house of Mr. P. at his invitation, to obtain if possible further evidence of the novel manifestations of force which had so greatly surprised myself and friends on the Tuesday evening previous. We reached the house at 7.30 p.m. The night was dark, but fine. Within five minutes we were introduced to the room we occupied on Sunday evening, Mr. C. entering first, followed by Mrs. P., Mr. H., and myself. We satisfied ourselves that the apartment, in size about 12ft square by 10ft high, contained nothing beyond its ordinary furniture; there were six chairs, an uncovered table, a sofa, and a sewing machine standing upon the carpeted floor. Upon the mantelpiece, we saw some chimney ornaments, upon the walls two or three pictures, and the windows were curtained. As soon as the remainder of the party had entered, I locked the door, and to give additional formality to the fastening a seal was put upon it by Mr. H. and Mr. P. The window was examined, so were the walls and floor, and all proved intact. We then, six in number, seated ourselves at the table. Mrs. P. had her back to the window, Mr. C. sat at her left hand, I at her right, upon my right Mr. P. sat, and Mr. and Mrs. H. completed the circle. Mr. H. and I provided ourselves with matches, in order to light the room at an instant's notice, and the candle was blown out. We sat silently for a minute or two, when the table gave unmistakeable signs of agitation. Loud taps were heard accompanied by intermittent noises, as a scratching under the table in different places, every now and then relieved by tremors of varying intensity. Mrs. P.'s right hand was all the time on the table and touching my left. After ten minutes had elapsed, during which there was no invocation of spirits, nor was the observance of any particular attitude of mind imposed upon us, or even suggested during the evening, Mrs. P. uttered what resembled a half-suppressed sigh, and the same instant there fell upon the middle of the table a heavy piece of ironwork. The noise did not suggest the fall from any considerable height; it seemed rather to be the result of the article being placed on the table by a strong hand. We observed afterwards that the table was not much indented. Within two seconds of the report a light was struck and we found before us a large barrow-wheel, weighing, as Mr. P. subsequently informed us, sixteen and a half pounds. We were told that the wheel had been last seen lying in the yard at a distance not less than 60ft from where we sat. It is noticeable that indications of exhaustion were now apparent in Mrs. P. After a few minutes conversation, in the course of which it was mentioned that this wheel had found its way into the room by the same agency on a former occasion along with a family bible, a ten-gallon cask, and some other things, we looked to the fastenings on the door and window, and once more inspected the walls, but finding no clue to the mystery we extinguished the solitary candle for the second time and found ourselves wondering in the dark. The rapping continued as before, but was varied this time by the candle-stick sliding once or twice across the table, and by Mrs. P. being violently dragged to the floor. About fifteen minutes had passed thus when a sudden exclamation from that lady caused M. H. and myself simultaneously to strike our matches. We were quick enough to see before it actually touched the table a hind quarter of bacon, which appeared to have been projected diagonally from the upper part of the front wall over Mrs. P.'s head. Her hands had not been removed trom the table. It was again ascertained that the seal and lock upon the door, and the fastening upon the window was untouched, and that the walls, absurd as it may seem, were to all appearance intact also. Symptoms of exhaustion were now more strongly apparent in Mrs. P., and it was noticed, upon putting out the light for the third time, that the preliminary convulsions of the table were weaker than before. We sat for perhaps twenty minutes without any substantial manifestations, Mrs. P. only remarking, in reply to her husband, that "they seem to be playing with my earrings." No notice was taken of this observation at the time, but upon lighting up a few minutes afterwards, when an adjournment had been decided upon, Mr. H. observed that Mrs. P. had no ear-rings on. Search was made for them without success. We then unfastened the door and withdrew to the back parlour. During this adjournment we were shown into the kitchen from where the bacon was taken, and into the yard where the wheelbarrow was said to have come from. At about ten p.m. we resumed the object of our errand. Mrs. P. went first into the room, but did not take her seat till all were assembled. The room was again examined and the door locked. Mrs. S. having cheerfully acceded to a proposal that she would change the position of her seat, the light was blown out. This time all hands were touching each other. Beyond occasional taps and flutterings of the table, the candlestick being once or twice pushed about, there was no apparent result for fifteen minutes, when the missing ear-rings were thrown on the table. We sat for a short time afterwards, and upon re-lighting, preparatory to our leaving for home, our attention was called to the fact that by some means a vessell containing a small quantity of liquid had found its way under the table from the adjoining bedroom.' I have now narrated as fully as I can what had come under the notice of myself and friends on the evening in question. The cause of these extraordinary manifestations I am altogether unable to comprehend, much less to explain. But in common with every one who has witnessed them I am firmly persuaded that if freedom from deception or imposture on the part of Mr. and Mrs. P. can make them so, these manifestations are perfectly genuine.

We are in receipt of "A Catechism for the Young" compiled by Miss Mary Finlason of Castlemaine for the use of the Lyceum Sunday School recently established there, and adapted for the use of Universalists, Spiritualists, and persons of Liberal thought. It is an excellent little book, containing elevating ideas in a form suitable to the comprehension of the children, and might advantageously be introduced in the home as well as in the school.

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We are happy to be able to announce that the preliminary steps have been taken for the establishment of a Children's Progressive Lyceum in this city. It will in all probability be inaugurated in a few weeks. The officers are already appointed. and as soon as a suitable room is obtained, and other arrangements made, a commencement will be made. Subscriptions in aid of the movement will be received by the Secretary an Librarian Mr. G. A. Stow, at the office of this paper.

SELF-HEALING ENERGIES BETTER THAN MEDICINE.

EARTHLY language cannot embody all we have to impart under this head, in regard to the perfect adaptation and competency of man's vital energies, to self-repair and harmonize the bodily organs.

As soul speaks to soul in the blissfulness and breathings of magnetic attraction, so the powers which live in all the cerebral centers and visceral organs meet and mingle together, like angels in the gardens of light, for purposes of greatest good to the physical and mental proprietor.

Suffering ones of earth! have ye not realized the medical wisdom that floats through every vein of your physical structure? There is no power more self-just and self-restoring than that which breathes, and sobs, and gushes, in your personal organization. Atheism is not more destitute of the divine qualities of intuitive wisdom than are the various systems of medicine of that restoring principle which alone can summon the spirit of health from its retreats in the corporeal economy. As ye cannot gather figs from thistles, so ye cannot obtain health from the drugs and medicines. Medicines cannot impart the principle of health, any more than can a book convey the light of wisdom. But there are aids and helps in medicine just as there are hints and streams of suggestiveness in books.

The error, however, is the source of reliance. The sin-sick soul goes meekly to a priest, or prayer-meeting, with unbounded confidence in the efficacy of the remedies and ceremonies prescribed by the priest. In like manner the diseased mortal seeks the doctor with unlimited faith in the power of popular nostrums and inorganic compounds. And yet, as the age of honesty and intelligence expands, we find patients and physicians more and more agreeing that medicines, *at best*, but serve and subserve the inherent energies of the organism; that health is possible only by means of the self-restoring and conservative principles which the good Father and Mother transmitted to the organs, muscles, nerves, and blood, of the living temple; and, therefore, that all belief, or pretension, that medicines hold and convey the life-giving energies of health and beauty to man's body, is not less than mischievous superstition or intentional imposition.

Disease, in very shortest phrase, is *discord*. The causes and effects of this one "discord" are various and innumerable. They differ in different persons, because of temperament and occupation; also, they differ in the seasons, because of *temperature* potential electricities. Spring-discords of body are different, in the same persons and places, from those which prevail in autumn; so, also, for reasons above given, winter-disturbances differ widely from those of the summer time.

Outward manifestations of invisible disturbances are indications of the causes of discord, which preponderate either in temperament, occupation, or temperature. Something is unbalanced in the empire of concealed forces—either an *excess*, a *deficiency*, or a *misplacement* of parts—perhaps, as occasionally happens, all these causes of pain and suffering exist and operate in combination.

When the body is thus besieged with "discord," how can the soul feel harmonious. It cannot, for mind must suffer with the organs by which it exists. This fact, however, is of the highest significance. It teaches that the mind, or rather the fountain of forces out of which the mind rises into entity from an elemental state, contains the conquering and health-giving powers. From these energies, and not from medicines, the sick may expect relief. Sweet and grateful breathings from invisible principles are cognizable only by means of the sensitive energies of mind. Granite rocks do not hear the whisperings of infinite wisdom, although they invariably move in harmony and keep step in progress with such wisdom; while human beings, when unfolded in their affections for the soft and thrilling music of truth, not only obey divine wisdom in the simple luxuriousness of spontaneous freedom; but, in addition to such obedience, they receive and enjoy that handsome healthfulness which naturally results from equilibrium with the principles of such wisdom. It is true that medicines and magnetisms can, and do, contribute (sometimes) to the right development of the patient's inherent energies of health; and so, indeed, do all arbitrary appliances affect, either for good or for evil, all bodies and forces with which they come in contact; but this surely cannot be interpreted and appropriated as a sufficient *foundation* for the absurd doctrine that drugs, medicines, and magnetisms, contain, *per se*, virtues which may displace or regenerate your vices and consequent misery.

Nay, nay—listen, O suffering soul of earth! and thine ear shall catch the soft and grateful music of Nature's truths. The authority and divinity of thy Eternal Father are impressed upon each speaking principle. Motion, Life, Sensation, Intelligence—do not these priples rule, or ought they not to govern, in every part of your physical body? Do they not labor day and night, both when you wake and when you sleep, for the full growth, refinement, and harmonious expansion of all organs and functions? Is not the unspeakable goodness of our Eternal Father and Mother displayed within the temple of your individuality? What principle of wisdom was it that, before you had a personal consciousness, built your bones and jointed them so beautifully? Do you not suppose that the same energy is with you this very moment? Behold with what promptness your windpipe expels a grain of sand or a bit of bread, which perchance invaded the province formed only to attract and enjoy the pure air of heaven. With what divine energy does the spirit of blood, work to heal the wound on the surface of your temple? A mote is in thine eye, instantly the tissues send forth a flood of tears to wash it away! Thy stomach is stronger in righteousness than thy brain. Ever since your birth the digestive receptacle has tempted, fed—crammed, jammed, and poisoned —with every imaginable good and evil thing, from the outrageous inventions of the nurse, who first took you from the doctor's hands, to the last pastrycook's indescribable compound of table temptations. Your brain could not contain one-half the shadows which such substances cast upon it, neither could your judgment dispose of a tenth part of such feeding in the shape of thought and intelligence, but your stomach pours forth its fluid and commissions, its self-healing attributes so promptly and perfectly that all you can justly complain of is—"indigestion;" headache of course, and intestinal disturbances.

Recuperation is natural to all living bodies. Every derangement, if curable at all, the self-repairing energies may overcome with harmony. Only open your understanding to a knowledge of those magnetic agencies, or perhaps mechanical aids, which will remove obstructions and thus put into Nature' hands the reins of physical government. Man's fearfully constructed body is more than paralleled by his wonderful mind. This power is endowed with the tendency to work both ways; it will either bring disease upon the body or remove it. If your own mind cannot *begin* the work (which many times happens), then avail yourself of the healing attributes of *another* mind. If your entrammeled imagination still needs a visible medicine to fix its faith upon, why—we are sorry for you—send for the only physician in whom you believe; and then straightway "let us pray" that he (or she) will give you the most artistically *small* dose of medicine possible for his sense of justice and adaptation to suggest.

The truth is, that, accidents excepted, *the great majority of human bodily diseases are of mental origin.* Disturbances *begin* in the *forces* and *end* in the *forms*; therefore, by virtue of a psychological and physiological necessity, the remedy must commence in the form and terminate in the Spiritual constitution. Swallowing a disgusting mass of medicine is never necessary, any more than is a weekly dose of orthodox religion indispensable to good morals and happiness after death; and yet, disgraceful and disagreeable as it is, there are millions of our humanity who habitually take atrociously large doses of both! From all this, and innumerable other equally popular outrages, "Good Lord deliver us!"

A. J. DAVIS.

[*From the "Western Star."*]

THE ESSAYIST.

WHAT IS SPIRITUALISM?

By Greyfriars.

There is no question of so much importance to the claims of Spiritualism on man's acceptance, as the one with which we preface this article.

In attempting to define what Spiritualism is, we are not disposed to defer, either to the vague and contradictory affirmations of common rumor, or to accept all the many-sided views taken of the subject by Spiritualists themselves.

In seeking for standards of right, morals, or religion, as in attempting to define Spiritualism, we are apt to mistake opinions for principles, and accept as authority the reflections of minds as fallible as our own.

Truth has been curtly defined as "that which is." Now when our minds are confused, and our judgments at fault, in the midst of the conflicting opinions that positive theorists would force upon us, is it not the part of wisdom to search earnestly and faithfully for "that which is," and afterwards proceed to draw our deductions and frame our theories concerning the significance and meaning of the facts we have observed?

Eschewing for the present the broad fields of research to which we have likened Spiritualism, namely, the standards of right, morals, and religion, let us for the nonce forget all our preconceived views and pet theories, and inquire what we have absolutely demonstrated to be FACT in Spiritualism.

Four well defined and well proven forms of fact have been evolved by the faithful and candid investigator: these are, first, that the soul of man survives the shock of death. Secondly, that the soul can and does, under favorable conditions not yet fully ascertained, communicate with man, through the signs and tokens called "spirit communion." Thirdly, that the soul retains the individuality which distinguished it in the mortal body. And fourthly, that the happiness or misery of the soul in its continued state of existence beyond the grave, depends upon the good or evil which it has performed on earth.

If it be asked—How far do these affirmatives become proven truths? we answer—By the laws of evidence commonly accepted amongst men; by the fact that millions of spirits in different places, through different individuals and under varieties of conditions that render collusion or mistake impossible, have testified to, and demonstrated each article of these four propositions beyond denial and doubt. Thus far, then, every faithful investigator into spirit communion is in a position to render an answer concerning his "ism," and to delare that these four cardinal points of his knowledge are absolutely true.

But the questioning world and the responding Spiritualist are not contented to rest here, nor limit their views of Spiritualism to the simple foundations of basic truth.

Endless are the theories which arise concerning the soul's substance and functions in the life beyond, and still more, on the nature of the signs and tokens by which spirits communicate, and the personages through whom the communion is effected.

It must be obvious that new and untrodden fields of physical science are here open to the foot of the explorer, and that a vast realm of knowledge will ultimately reward the student who seeks patiently to analyse and master these occult subjects. In the meantime, however, it may require years or even generations of the most persistent experiment to discover the wonderfully potent but invisible forces which sustain spiritual existence.

The full understanding and application of the methods by which the spiritual telegraph is worked, may not be evolved without the careful and astute observation of a whole century's experience. Still, the evidences of scientific method, and the dependence upon fixed though unknown conditions which the phenomena of the communion evince, justify us in affirming that the philosophy of this communion involves the sublime and stupendous "science of soul."

But when we turn to the third and fourth axiomatic facts of Spiritualism, a new set of indications opens up before us.

Instead of scientific phenomena, the social, moral, and religious aspects of Spiritualism are disclosed. Consider, for example, the following propositions:—

"The soul retains the individuality and self-consciousness which distinguished it in the mortal body; and the happiness or misery of the soul in its continued existence beyond the grave depends on the good or evil which it has performed on earth."

All the mysteries of godliness, the vague imaginings concerning triune deities and God-men, the distracting vagaries of an immaculate conception, vicarious atonement, election, free grace and no grace, regeneration, infant and other wholesale forms of damnation, transubstantiation, and ecclesiastical doctrines generally, vanish into thin air before the stern justice and practical import of these stupendous revelations.

"Death does not change the real man; heaven and hell are conditions manufactured within us; good and evil are the sole manufacturers, and progress is eternal."

A religion founded on such propositions as these, may destroy the worth of heavenly passports, peddled out at the price of tithes and pew rents from ecclesiastical auction booths, or aim iconoclastic blows at the craft whose peculiar office is, as Pope describes, to "deal damnation round the world;" but, if they are truths, and can be demonstrated as such, what matters it who stands or falls in opposing them? Popedoms, bishoprics, conventicles, and assemblies, will perish and be forgotten, even the popular saints whom it takes from ten to twenty thousand dollars a year, and their expenses to Europe, to sustain, will be remembered no more, whilst the recording angel's voice, echoed and re-echoed by millions of spirit witnesses, will thunder down the ages, "There is no more death, and the soul of man is in judgment for the deeds done in the body."

The conditions of life in the spheres, the means of growth and unfoldment, penalty and reward, inspiration, obsession, reincarnation and its emphatic denial, conjugal and ascetic life, together with recommendations how to pursue and how to avoid certain curses, constitute a great majority of the communications from the spirit world which are superadded to the facts of the communion, and involving, as they often do, contradictory and perplexing opinions, subserve but little other purpose than to prove that the spirit world is a human world, and that as yet we have not succeeded in evolving any other authentic forms of truth from the communion than the four basic facts above stated.

There is, however, one most valuable lesson to be learned from the various and contradictory communication of spirits, which if this: that the sincere seeker for truth should never accept of any dictum, whether from mortals or immortals, that does not commend itself to our highest sense of right, and prove to be in harmony with the divine scheme of cause and effect revealed in the gospel of nature.

All spirits affirm, without any contrariety, that they have created their own heaven or hell from the good or evil deeds, words, and thoughts, which have made up the sum of their earthly lives.

All spirits represent heaven and hell as mental and moral states, not localities, and continue to affirm that the performance of good or evil deeds determine their continuance in these states in the spirit world, as on earth.

Here, then, we gain a pivotal point around which all the practical issues of earth life revolve, namely, the necessity for a correct definition of what good and evil means, and here, too, is it that all the "new departures," side issues, fierce discords, and bitter inharmonies which pervade the ranks of Spiritualism, enter upon the scene.

Spiritualists cannot truly realize the solemn truth of inevitable compensation and retribution for good and evil, without bracing all the energies of their being to the task of discovering what good and evil means, and how we may ensure the compensations of the one and avoid the penalties of the other.

The optimist adopts the easiest method of settling the question, that is, as far as his own satisfaction and

word logic is concerned, for he declares that there is no evil, and, "Whatever is, is right." To the most casual observer of the conditions presented by the dark and undeveloped spirits who have not yet come out of the prison houses of crime committed on earth, this kind of logic does not pass for much more than "sounding brass, and tinkling cymbals."

Half a dozen visits to Mrs. Conant's circles at the *Banner of Light* office will suffice to convince the most transcendental of optimists that there are terrible conditions of suffering for some form of human action, and glorious states of happiness resulting from others.

Back to our original proposition, therefore, we must return and continue to ask—What is good and what is evil? and if we don't like these terms, What are those conditions of the spirit which result in happiness or misery hereafter? That a great many truth-loving minds should fancy they have discovered the basic principles of good and evil, when they are in reality only shadowing forth their own limited perceptions of life, is not to be wondered at, neither is it strange that newly awakened souls, under the mighty afflatus of the great modern Spiritual outpouring, in their eagerness to aid in inaugurating the practical religion demanded by Spiritualism, should mistake their ideas of some great radical change or favorite scheme of reform, for the exact methods required to build up "a new heaven and a new earth."

Now, when, as too frequently happens, the reformer is fierce and dogmatical in enforcing his views, and the conservative bitter and denunciatory in rejecting them, the result is fatal to conviction on either side, and only ends in unspiritual antagonism and useless acts of recrimination.

Already the ranks of Spiritualism, once arrayed in serried masses of fraternal strength and zealous devotion to a common cause are broken, disunited and disgraced by the lamentable spirit of internal discord, whilst the good soldier who used to be engaged in doing gallant battle against all opponents to the glorious light of Spiritualism, spends his time in hurling epithets of scorn, and devising spiteful methods of wounding and abusing all and sundry who dissent from his own particular views of reform.

In the meantime, we query—Is there no fundamental basis of truth in this great cause upon which all its adherents can agree, and from which each can quietly take their "departures," to act out their ideas of reform upon all other subjects, without insult and injury to those who do not choose to follow in their footsteps? Already we have anticipated the answer to this question in the earlier statements of this article, and now we are prepared to advance to a still higher step of the temple of truth.

The belief that we must necessarily suffer or rejoice hereafter for all our acts of omission as well as commission here, forms a tremendous motor power, to urge us forward in any and every direction in which we think our duties lie. It has yet to be proved, however, that Spiritualism authoritatively defines what those several duties are, and in this sense it is an act of bold tyranny and presumptuous dogmatism for one individual to say to another, "You are no Spiritualist if you do not adopt the path I am treading, and endorse the theories I propound." It is a libel too, on the present aspect of Spiritualism, for any individual to assert that this or that peculiar method of thought or action is Spiritualism, and that outside of it there is no Spiritualism.

Reasoning from the belief that Spiritualism is the grand motor which should pervade our lives, and urge us on to the performance of every duty which lies before us, every reform which can bless or benefit mankind is a part, though not the whole, of Spiritualism.

Every reformatory idea which can stimulate mankind to the better performance of a true and useful life, is a fit subject for discussion in our Spiritual literature, and on our Spiritual rostrums; and no idea, however trivial, or however grand, which helps to determine the character of the human soul, can be excluded from the all-embracing influence of Spiritualism. It may here be questioned whether we mean to include as fit subjects for discussion, and fit themes for Spiritual literature, politics, the various reforms of the day, such as social, moral, commercial, and even financial reforms; the labor and marriage questions; free love, and no love at all; woman's rights, and woman's wrongs, &c.; to this query we emphatically answer, Yes! All these things are fit subjects for Spiritualistic discussion, and all these reforms would be better understood and better dealt with, considered from true Spiritualistic stand-points; but let us not forget the sharp line of demarcation to be drawn between the importance of the subjects and the variety of methods by which they are represented and sometimes misrepresented by their advocates.

As far as all these ideas of reform are portions of human interest, as far as they have an influence on the human soul here and its well-being hereafter, they emphatically come within the scope of Spiritualism to discuss, vitalize, and ultimately to deal with; but where individuals have the right to protest against the action of those especially devoted to an exposition of these subjects, is, that a belief in the communion of spirits does not necessarily commit the believer to all the theories and opinions entertained by other Spiritualists, and compel them to adopt the particular methods of reform which they propose.

It is one thing to state a grievance, but quite another to right it. We should far exceed the limits of this article were we to place in juxtaposition the load of wrong beneath which humanity groans, and the wild, contradictory, and sometimes pernicious methods by which even well-meaning persons propose to redress that wrong; and herein lies the injustice of labelling upon Spiritualism, opinions, theories, and views of reform, which to thousands of believers in spirit communion, and even to same of the advocates of the very reforms in question, appear erroneous, objectionable, and unspiritual.

The only standards of appeal which can ever resolve the vexed problems of human opinion, are the immutable laws underlying the whole scheme of being, and sternly manifested in the sublime chain of eternal cause and effect, and it is only by a searching analysis of these divine methods of teaching that we shall ever clearly discern what is good and evil, or distinguish what is right and wrong.

Spirits hold the torch to illuminate these researches, but are not privileged or wise enough to be our dictators in applying them. Spiritualists are commanded, on the stern conditions of penalty and compensation, to seek into the profoundest depths of truth, and to act out their highest perceptions of it; but they are not privileged nor yet wise enough authoritatively to dictate to each other what methods of action are the only true and right ones, unless they can demonstrate their views by a strict analysis of the laws and harmonies of creation.

The great Poughkeepsie Seer, the profound and star-eyed prophet and clairvoyant, A. J. Davis, in enunciating the idea that life will never be fully understood until it becomes a "harmonial philosophy," has advanced a century beyond his age, and pointed to the only reconciler which can stand between divided opinions aud crashing theories, namely, a true and harmonious science of life in all departments of thought and being. Spiritualism is not the unpractical transcendentalism which excludes the consideration of any vital question, or fails to reach down, as well as to climb up, to all life's issues and duties; but Spiritualism pronounces no dictum which is not founded upon the authority of truth, and admits of no special interpretation to suit the views of rabid radicalism, or narrow conservatism. It is the science of life here and hereafter, and as such, demands a scientific demonstration of every proposition made in its name.

It is all of life and not a part only. It includes all reforms, without endorsing the views of all "reformers." It is the great "Pan" of the 19th century. When we can turn from the surface of life's ocean, cease to steer our way by the many opposing directions in which our fellow voyagers are moving, and, sinking the plummet line of research into the deep waters of eternal truth, draw it up again freighted with those waymarks of immutable law upon which the Great Spirit has fixed the eternal order of being, then, and then only we may conclude that we understand Spiritualism. Then and then only are we anchored on the standard of appeal

before which the clamoring tones of human discord are hushed; then, and then only, are we prepared to steer our way to the port of eternity by the chart of eternal and divine principles.

BRIEF INSTRUCTIONS TO PERSONS DESIRING TO INVESTIGATE SPIRITUALISM.

At the request of several of our readers, we publish the following for the guidance of intending investigators, and shall continue to do so from time time, whenever space will admit.

It is, in the first place, an essential to the harmony of the intended circle that the apartment in which they purpose meeting should be of a comfortable temperature, and *not too warm*, for anything which tends to discompose the physical organization, militates against that harmony and passivity of mind which is essential for fluent and orderly communications. It is possible, in some instances, for persons to investigate successfully *alone;* but it is rare that all the qualifications necessary are to be met with in one individual. It is better entered upon by an association of six or more individuals, with as great a diversity of temperament as possible. If able to get together the requisite number, it is better to form a circle in this wise, viz.: let the company sit down around a moderately sized loo table, or light square one, with the dark and fair, or positive and negative temperaments alternate; sit in an easy position, with the palms of the hands on the table, and the right hand touching the neighbours left, so as to make a complete chain (have at hand a planchette and some large white paper.) The first indication of an Influence is a slight vibration or wavy sensation under the hand, although the table may not perceptibly move; if this is distinctly felt, a movement of the table is sure to follow. The most common movement is the elevation of one side of the table, but a rotary or lateral movement will often occur. Should a distinct movement occur, one of the circle should ask the invisible influence to move the table towards the person whom they can best influence as a medium; when this is accomplished, all questions should be put by the person so selected, who acts as chairman of the meeting. The ordinary and, perhaps, most appropriate questions to begin with are, "Is there a spirit present, if so, will it move the table a certain number of times?" This being answered satisfactorily, make an arrangement with the unseen influence, that three movements shall signify an affirmative; one, a negative; and two, *doubtful.* If the questions are answered fluently, suggest the use of the alphabet. The medium slowly repeating the letters, the table being raised at the right one, until a word is spelt out. In this way, where the control of the table is good, messages of a considerable length may be received. Do not ask questions on purely material subjects, nor presume that spirits know everything, or you will meet with disappointments. If, after half-an-hour's sitting, you should not succeed in obtaining a movement, bring forward the planchette, lay a sheet of paper on the table, and place the planchette upon it between two of the sitters, the apex (containing the pencil) from them. The person to the left of it should place the right hand, and the one to the right, the left hand upon it; at first the arm may rest upon the table, but after a little while raise it, and let the pressure on the planchette be as light as possible. If a movement is obtained, it only requires application to lead to the reception of intelligible writing, which may come on the first occasion or take several sittings to develop. Should the first two not succeed, let two others try, try also different combinations, until you have exhausted the material of your circle,this will seldom happen; but, if it should do so, it will be necessary to add to its numbers. To ensure success and progress, the circle should meet regularly, and when the best arrangement of the individuals composing it has been ascertained, they should be careful to occupy the same positions at the table on every occasion. If strangers are allowed to join the circle after it has commenced the reception of communications, it has a disturbing effect, and is likely to lead to unsatisfactory results.

Most persons have some mediumistic power, and it rarely happens that where there are three or four persons in a family, they cannot get the planchette to operate, even without forming a circle, but the evidences so obtained are not always so satisfactory as those obtained by systematic application. If the investigation is earnestly pursued, higher forms of mediumship grow out of it, in acccordance with the developing capacity of the individuals composing it. W. H. T.

MYSTERIOUS PHENOMENA AT BADEN BADEN.

The London "Tablet" reprints from *The Univers*, an account of curious and startling phenomena (analogous to spirit photography) occurring at Baden. It appears that figures, crosses, deaths heads, and other devices appeared upon numerous windows of churches and dwelling houses in the town, causing much consternation. Among other things it is stated that on Whit Tuesday, there was seen all at once on the window of girl's school at St. John's parish, a figure of the Blessed Virgin, she had a Lion under her feet, on which she seemed to be trampling; on each side of her there appeared the figures of Turcos and French soldiers, also of a ship that seemed to be sinking, and several small black crosses. The Curé was sent for, and when he saw it he destroyed the pane, but immediately the design was reproduced on an upper window. No less than sixty-six cases were testified to, and the excitement was so great, that the Prussian Government had to forbid the further publication of details.

THE "WESTERN STAR."

In the May number of *The Harbinger*, we published the prospectus of a projected new Magazine, to be called the "Western Star." By the last Californian Mail, we received a parcel of the first number of the serial alluded to. We find it is edited by Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten, and the result is, a high class Spiritual Magazine, containing a series of interesting and instructive articles on Spiritualism and kindred subjects (one of which we reprint in another column); also, the first chapter of the second volume of "Modern Spiritualism in America," which proves the occurrence of remarkable and undoubtedly Spiritual phenomena in the early part of the present century. The phenomena are testified to by the affidavits of forty witnesses, one of whom was the Rev. Abraham Cummings, a man eminent in learning and piety, and a Graduate of Harvard University. Although these manifestations continued for a lengthened period, no attempt appears to have been made to systematize them or turn them to practical use, the case being apparently looked upon as exceptional. The systemization of the phenomena appears to have originated with the Fox family, in connection with what were commonly known as the Rochester knockings, some of the results of which are ably reviewed in an article, entitled, "Sibylline Leaves in the Nineteenth Century."

The next article, "Ghost Land," is the first of a series of researches into the mysteries of Spiritual existence, by one who has devoted a lifetime to the subject, and, judging from the first part, will be a work of considerable interest. The introductory and concluding articles are original and appropriate. We commend the magazine to advanced thinkers, both inside and outside the spiritual pale.

Since our last issue, we have received a prospectus of the "Aurelia" Co-operative Land and Labour Association, which is the one we alluded to as originating in New Zealand. The association is intended to be formed on the Harmonial basis, the primary qualification for membership being that the candidates should accept the leading principles of the Harmonial Philosophy. The ideas embodied in the prospectus are excellent, and if they can be practically carried out will ensure the success of the Association, and the comfort and happiness of its members, we have a few prospectuses and will send a copy by post on receipt of postage. An advertisement in reference to the Association appears in another column.

EXTRAORDINARY MANIFESTATIONS.

The following is an extract from a private letter recently received by a gentleman in Melbourne, Mr. E. R. from his wife at present residing at Castlemaine. Some physical phenomena we are informed, occurred in her presence previously, but not so remarkable as the following. It appears that media for physical manifestations are accumulating in this part.

"The night I received your Letter, my candle was blown out (by some invisible agent) four times, and on my attempting to light it the fourth time, the match was taken out of my hand and applied to the candle. I tried to sleep, and after a while did so, but awoke finding the clothes pulled off me, and placed away on the floor, I replaced them and they were a second time removed. One evening since when returning from M.—— I was shaken violently by the shoulder three times, no person being near me. On my arrival home, your portrait was taken down and torn in pieces, and then put together again. All the portraits in the Album were taken out, and placed in five different parcels, all our relations in one, Mr. and Mrs. A. in another, B. and E. in a fourth *F being thrown on the floor. I went to bed leaving them as they were, but in the morning they disappeared, and could not be found. A few nights after while walking in the middle of the road, the photographs were all placed in my hand, by some invisible agency. What do you think of it?" * * * *

* Had been a false friend.

Defeated on the platform Mr. David Blair fell back upon the press, and furnished five of the most disingenious articles on Spiritualism it is possible to conceive of, to the "Ballarat Evening Mail." These were exhaustively reviewed and their fallacies exposed, in a series of eight letters by W.L.R., published in the same paper, since then the following able letter from a well-known and consistent Spiritualist has appeared, and we reprint it from the "Evening Mail," for the benefit of our readers.

SPIRITUALISM.

To the Editor of the Evening Mail.

Sir,—Our amiable though slippery antagonist, wisely omitting any reference to facts and arguments, which he never before heard of, and which he cannot meet, allows judgment to go by default. Totally unable to face the main question of the objective reality of the phenomena, which prove the truth of Spiritualism, he endeavours to slip out of the discussion of facts by disputing my opinion, and that of hundreds of other persons, relative to the absurdities poured forth by him in the late discussion, about the "supernatural," "the doctrines," the "Yankee impostors," and, indeed, any and every subject, except the point named by Mr. Tyerman, "Is Spiritualism true?" I strive, however, not for victory but for truth Spiritualists know that ignorance is the sole cause of all antagonism to their facts; they can have, therefore, no other feeling but that of pity for their opponents. My opinion of Mr. David Blair's attempted attack was, as I considered, as little offensive as possible; having no desire to follow his example by using intemperate language, I expressed myself as mildly as the case would allow. There is, however, a higher duty than even a consideration of the feelings of our ignorant fellow mortals—that duty is loyalty to truth. In the interests of that truth, then, and on behalf of the millions of his equals and superiors whom he has grossly insulted, outraged, and villified, I feel called upon to declare that the part played by the traverser in the recent discussion was a pitiable exhibition of lamentable ignorance! This is easily proved, and I ask no one to take my word for it. Let any sceptic do as I have done—devote three years to the personal investigation of the subject; let the circles at Sandhurst and Castlemaine be visited, or, better still, let twenty earnest, honest, men and women meet once or twice a week for six months, observing, as nearly as they can, the conditions laid down by Mrs. Hardinge Britten, William Howitt, or any other intelligent, experienced investigator. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." I distinctly affirm this proving of the reality of the basic facts of Spiritualism is open to all. This will settle the question better and sooner than any sophistical declamation. My opinion of the success of the Sandhurst and Castlemaine circles is, that that success is due to the presence of the vast masses of quartz. Baron Reichenbach demonstrated the action of crystalline bodies on the human system. He proved that a force named by him, the "Odyllic," or "odd force," is given out by such, and that it favors the trance condition. Ballarat is thus admirably situated for inquirers, and, if I remember right, its inhabitants are as capable of observing, and as incapable of wilful imposture, as the inhabitants of any other district. I shall be very happy to furnish inquirers with an introduction to the circles aforenamed, where they can, at least, observe the necessary conditions which we believe are evidences of laws regulating this embryonic science. Add to this the fact that there is a challenge of one thousand guineas still open to be claimed by any one proving Spiritualism to be imposture. Our friend "Corpus" will be glad to know that the coins brought to the little medium at Sandhurst are ordinary coins of the realm. On my last visit, there had been brought £5 12s. 1d. in notes, half-crowns, shillings, sixpences, threepenny and fourpenny pieces, and coppers. Some of these were stated to have been found in different places by the invisibles, and were lost monies—of others, nothing was told. No sophistry can upset such facts; let them be examined then, and disproved, or let ignorance, ridicule, and prejudiced unbelief for ever keep silent. Neither ashamed nor afraid of the truth, I am, yours.

W. LINDESAY RICHARDSON.

Evening Mail, Sept. 19, 1872.

RECLAIMED.

By Mrs. Ploughshare.

When our William came in this morning with his milk-tins, there followed him into the kitchen what turned out to be a little boy.

What have you here, William?

"What," indeed; you should rather say "Who?"

Well, "who," if you like; but I should rather think "what" is more near the mark.

I often see larrikins in the streets of Melbourne, but I now see what very much looks like a larrikin in Footscray; and if you call such as that "who," why, what you would call decent people I should like to know, and where the distinction between one and the other is.

Now, Mary, my love, don't speak quite so fast, and I will tell you where and under what circumstances I found this little boy. But first, he is very hungry, and I want you to give him something to eat. You syle the milk, while I fetch the bread up out of the cellar, and then he will be able to satisfy his hunger. There, that will be enough, my love, there will not be any room for bread in the basin if you fill it so full of milk.

M.—I think, William, if you had brought that milking-stool out of the shed, for "it" to sit upon, my nice kitchen chairs would not want scrubbing with soap and water, which I have neither time nor strength for to-day. I want to know who would like to sit on either of those chairs now, before being washed, if they knew who had been in them. Stand on one side, here is our dear friend Mr. Cabin.

C.—Good morning, Mrs. Ploughshare, and how is William? I have not come to stay; just called to say that the Rev. Mr. Weedle will preach to-morrow and administer the sacrament. You will try and be there? I wish you could only persuade your husband to come to church with you. The importance of attending the house of God cannot be exaggerated.

M.—William just went out at one door as you came in at the other. Do you know, he is very good to me, and every opportunity he has of doing good to others, he does it; yet it is a source of anxiety to me that he takes no interest in religion.

C.—It may well be. You must make it a matter of prayer, and I will call upon him the first opportunity and talk with him. Good morning; I have many places to call at, so you must excuse me.

M.—William!

W.—I am coming. You did not see that cow breaking down the fence; she would have been in the garden in another minute.

M.—Yes, whenever the Rev. Mr. Cabin calls here, you find something the matter the moment he enters the door—a shelf is falling down, aud you begin to hammer nails in; the goats are in the garden; or, as it was to-day, a cow is breaking down the fence—just as if the matters of this life were worthy of a moment's consideration compared with those of eternity. William, if you would only show a little concern for the interests of your immortal soul you would act more like as if you cared about my peace of mind.

W.—Come, come, my dear little wife, don't be talking like that; you know I am not indifferent to your present or future happiness. Only look at that little fellow, is he not tucking it in?

M.—Now, do you know Mr. Cabin sat himself right down on that very chair I was just going to take into the yard when he came in. I hope surely the dear man has not got anything upon him through sitting on that chair.

W.—Now, my little fellow, have you eat all you can! Thank you, sir, I am quite full.

W.—Can you tell us your name, and how old you are?

I don't know what my mother and father was named, but at the school they call me Grim. The master said my name was Grimes. I don't know how old I am, not exactly; but I think about ten years. We had no birthdays in the Industrial School, so we don't know how old we get.

M.—Have you got any parents, then? If you have, they must be very wicked people to let their child run wild in the manner you have.

W.—Now, Mary, if that water is hot let me have it in the bath-room; and Grim you come along with me, my boy, and we will try what a clean skin will do for you. Give that bucket of hot water to me, Mary, and go to my chest and fetch out a clean shirt and a suit of some sort of clothing that will make shift for him today.

M.—Have you shut him up in the bath-room? I tell you, William, I don,t understand you. Are you going to feed, clothe, and adopt a larrikin? If you wan't a child, why can't you take one of those children we know, who belong to decent people and go to a Sunday School? William, I am surprised at you. Did you not always say you wanted no children? and God has not blessed us with any accordingly. And now you go and fly right in his face, by picking up a dirty larrikin out of the swamp.

W.—Mary, my dear, do keep yourself calm and listen to reason, and while he is using the soap and warm water, I will tell you how I came to bring him home with me. I was hunting the cows, and you know during the dry weather they are very fond of getting on the swampy land. During my search I had occasion to pass round the Powder Magazine, when I saw in the corner of one of the buttresses of the outer wall what I thought to be a heap of old clothes. As was natural, I raised my foot for the purpose of turning it over, when I observed a little hand. I then shook the owner of that hand. He awoke and started to his feet. He look frightened, and made as though he would run away, when I stopped him, and said, "My lad what brings you here, and where do you belong?" He said, Oh, master, do not take me to the police, and I will tell you all about where I came from. I am so hungry, and so cold, and have nowhere to go. When you shook me I was fast asleep, and thought I saw my mother; that she clasped me in her arms and kissed me. Oh, sir, it was such a beautiful place. I should have liked to have stayed there for ever. But now you have awoke me, I see it could only have been a dream; for I have no mother, no home, no friends. I ran away from the Sunbury School, and dare not return. I know not where to go. I suppose I am lost. I felt impossible to resist the boy's appeal. What have I to do with who or what the boy is, or where he comes from? He is a human being in distress, and asks me for that relief which it is in my power, and consequently my privilege, to give him. You called him a larrikin, and if external appearances are a sure guide to character, Grim certainly belongs to that species of animal.

By-the bye, Mary, did Mr. Cabin speak to him?

M.—No. You don't know what a relief it was to me when he was gone; for I was so afraid he would ask me who Grim was, but he never seemed to notice him.

W.—You bring me the things he has to put on, and I will go and see if the boy has finished his bath.

I went and firbidged up some of William's old things; but the very idea (as I said to him) of putting his things on a child ten or eleven years old. Well, said William, never mind; they are clean. My William is not what you would call a big man, by any means; but when he brought that child out of the bath-room with those clothes on, I was taken with such a fit of laughter that William was afraid I should bring on hysterics. The suit was one of those common "reach me down" suits of summer tweed, and the first time it wanted washing it became so short and so narrow that William could not wear it again. Well, short and narrow as this suit of clothes was for William, poor Grim looked like a marlingspike in a sack-bag. But the poor child looked clean and smelt sweet.

Now, Mary, said William, I have to go to town to-day, so you can set Grim to help you with any little jobs about the place that he will be able to do in his present muffied costume; and first let him make a fire in the garden and burn up his old clothes.

As soon as William was gone, Now, Grim, I said, bring out those old things of yours and let us have a bonfire in the garden.

If you please, marm, shan't I want them again?

(To be continued.)

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